

The Resilient Library Newsletter

November 22, 2020

Volume 2, Issue 4

PLEASE NOTE:

Many of the images and underlined text in this newsletter have hyperlinks to their corresponding websites

Press Ctrl+click on images and underlined text to be directed to those websites

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A Caregiver's Guide to Coping with Stress and Burnout

[From caring.com](http://From.caring.com)

What is Caregiver Burnout?

Caregiver burnout is mental, emotional and physical exhaustion that may develop through the responsibilities of supporting and caring for another individual. "Caregivers often focus so intently on the needs of the individual receiving care that they may neglect their own health and wellness," says Darren Sush, Psy.D., a licensed clinical psychologist in Los Angeles.

As this lack of self-care persists, along with the ongoing obligations of providing care for a loved one, caregivers' exhaustion often intensifies, impacting different aspects of their lives, as well as their effectiveness and com-

passion as a caregiver.

Sush says that burnout may be easily misunderstood as simply feeling overly tired, or even occasionally exhausted. "Unfortunately, while being tired can often be resolved by taking a break, getting a little more sleep, or actively trying to relax, burnout is more often less easily relieved. Individuals who experience caregiver burnout, tend to face an all-encompassing fatigue that impacts multiple areas of their lives," he says.

Caregiver burnout can happen to anyone who is providing care for another person, whether it's hands-on care, is only occasional, from a distance, or even at the "managerial" level, says Zina Paris, MSW, associate director of Clini-

cal Services at Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles, a local non-profit that helps families affected by Alzheimer's and other dementias. "It happens when you feel that the experience of caregiving is overwhelming and that you do not have the support – physically, mentally, emotionally, financially – that you need in order to successfully care for the person and to take care of yourself adequately at the same time," says Paris.

Very often, caregivers can find themselves accustomed to the routine stress, worry, and discomfort that comes with providing care for a loved one. And as a result, Sush says you may not acknowledge warning signs of your

See **Coping** on page 2

Coping with Burnout (continued from page 1)

own needs for gaining support.

Caregivers are among the three most-stressed groups in the country, according to the 2012 Stress in America Report by the American Psychological Association. Some researchers call the unique stress experienced by family caregivers a form of posttraumatic stress syndrome. As many as 70 percent of family caregivers show signs of depression, surveys show — far higher rates than for peers who aren't in a caregiver role.

Recognize the Symptoms of Caregiver Burnout

1. A Short Fuse

Losing your temper easily or feeling angry toward friends, family

members or even the person you're caring for is one obvious sign of caregiver stress. Frustration may particularly increase when obstacles or challenges come up, whether major or minor.

2. Emotional Outbursts

If you find yourself crying or feeling despair unexpectedly or more often, that could be another warning sign. Of course, if you're caring for a loved one with a declining condition, it's natural to grieve, and caregiving can stir up a range of complicated emotions. But if you're increasingly emotional or feeling emotionally fragile, there may be something more going on. Depression is a real risk for caregivers. Even if you're not

clinically depressed, emotional outbursts can be an unconscious outlet for feelings of being overwhelmed.

3. Sleep Problems

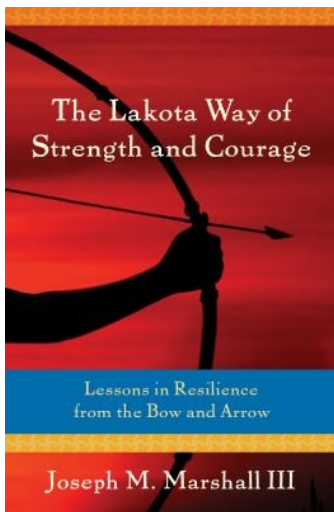
If you're having trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up tired, that could be another warning sign. Caregiving—especially full-time caregiving—requires tremendous physical effort, but the emotions involved can lead to sleepless nights. Sometimes the issues your care recipient may be suffering from, like wandering or waking up in the middle of the night in pain, can cost you opportunities to rest on top of the tiring work you do

See **Coping** on page 6

DO YOU HAVE CAREGIVER BURNOUT?



1. YOU NO LONGER FIND PLEASURE IN THINGS YOU ONCE FOUND ENJOYABLE.
2. FRIENDS AND FAMILY HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR WELL-BEING.
3. YOU'RE GETTING NEGATIVE FEEDBACK AT WORK.
4. YOU'RE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR SPOUSE.
5. YOU EXPERIENCE INTENSE AND RECURRENT FEELINGS OF ANGER, SADNESS, WORRY OR FEAR.
6. YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING.
7. YOU HAVE TROUBLE SLEEPING, DRASTIC WEIGHT CHANGES OR OTHER UNEXPLAINED HEALTH PROBLEMS.
8. YOU USE A SUBSTANCE TO COPE WITH, MANAGE OR SUPPRESS PAINFUL FEELINGS.



Book Spotlight— *The Lakota Way of Strength and Courage: Lessons in Resilience from the Bow and Arrow*

From the back cover:

In the mythic tradition of the Lakota, the bow and arrow were more than just tools--they were symbols of flexibility and strength. In this treasury of teaching stories, history, and piercing cultural insights, storyteller and craftsman Joseph Marshall III considers the metaphor of the bow

and arrow as a path to personal growth, better resilience, and a life lived with true integrity.

“In [*The Lakota Way of Strength and Courage*](#), traditional elder Joseph Marshall gives us an in-depth, intimate view of pre-reservation Native American resourcefulness and values and how they

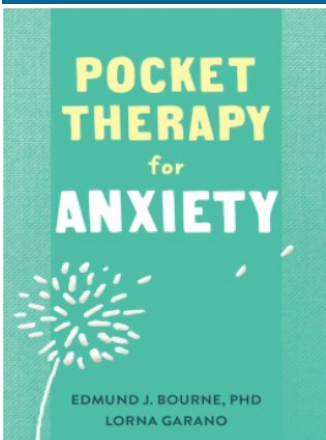
can inspire us to develop our own purpose, strength, and resilience.”

-NICKI SCULLY

Author of *Becoming an Oracle* and *Planetary Healing*

Check this book out from our Library catalog at www.rvl.info

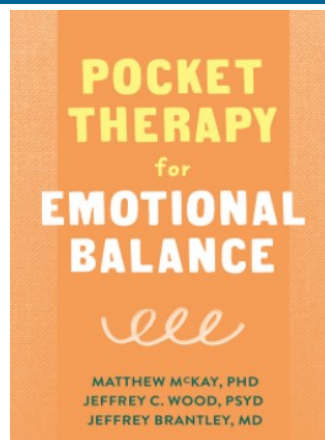
Pocket Guides Available Through Overdrive



If you suffer from anxiety, you may try to avoid the situations that cause

you to feel uneasy. But avoidance isn't the answer—and letting your fears and worries constantly hold you back will ultimately keep you from living the life you truly want. So, how can you learn to cope with your anxiety at the moment? This little book can help you face your fears and take charge of your anxiety—wherever or whenever it shows up.

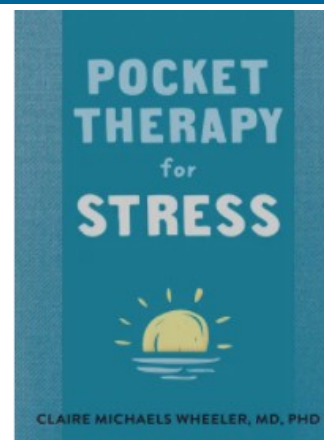
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Sometimes emotions can feel like a big, powerful tidal wave

that will sweep you away. And the more you try to suppress or put a lid on these emotions, the more overwhelming they get. So, how can you feel better when difficult emotions threaten to wash over you?

Bite-sized, evidence-based tips and tools for managing intense emotions in the moment—from the authors of *The Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Workbook*!



Stress—We all struggle with it. And many of us don't even realize we're stressed out until

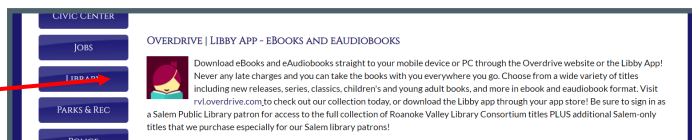
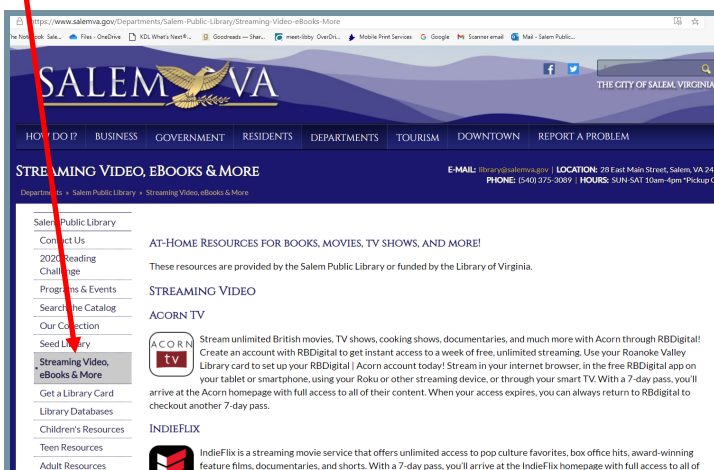
we experience more serious symptoms like insomnia ...or chronic pain. Wouldn't it be nice to have quick, actionable skills you could turn to when you're feeling stressed, so you could get back to living a full, happy, and healthy life?

Grounded in positive psychology, mind-body medicine, and cognitive behavioral therapy, the ten simple but effective strategies in this little book are a powerful antidote to stress.

A Little Bit Techie—Using Overdrive

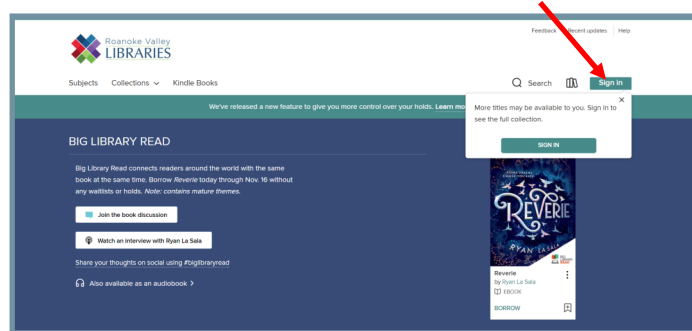
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1. Go to <https://www.salemva.gov/Departments/Salem-Public-Library/Streaming-Video-eBooks-More> and scroll down to OVERDRIVE/LIBBY APP—EBOOKS AND EAUDIOBOOKS



2. You will be directed to the Overdrive home page.

3. Create an account by clicking on "SIGN IN."

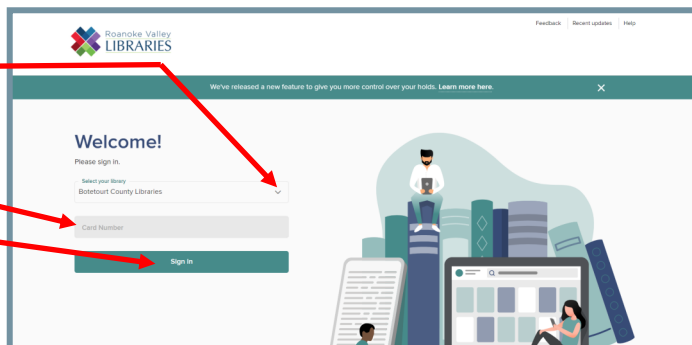


4. In the "Select your library box," click on the chevron symbol and select "Salem Public Library."

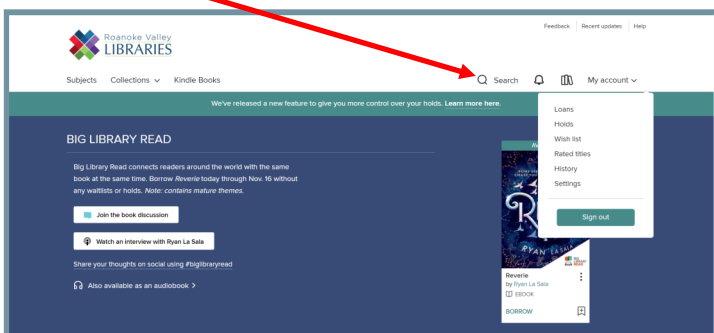
5. In the "Card Number" box, enter your library card number (all 13 digits, no spaces).

6. Click on "Sign In."

7. If you know the title or author you are interested in, click on "Search" to find eBooks or eAudio-books.

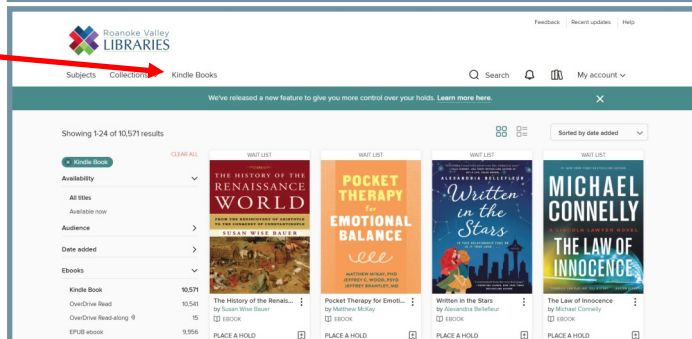
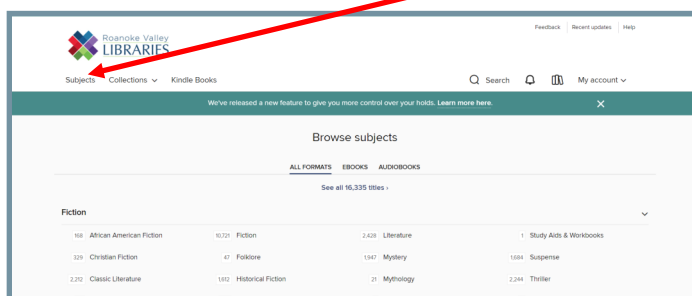
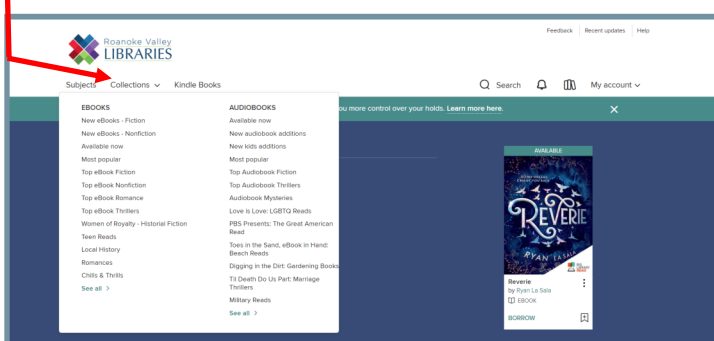


8. If unsure what to read next, click on "Subjects" to help narrow your search.



9. Looking for something new or popular to read, click on "Collections."

10. Have a Kindle? Search "Kindle Books."



Thankful trees, or gratitude trees, are a great Thanksgiving tradition that involves inviting your guests to write down what they're most thankful for on an ornament, then place it on the tree as part of an interactive seasonal display. Not only do these crafts make for a great holiday decor piece, it's also a wonderful way to give thanks for the season.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A few twigs or small tree	Pen, markers, or crayons
Construction paper or other colored paper	Pipe cleaners, twist ties, Christmas ornament hooks, or yarn
Flower vase or other container	Small rocks or marbles
Yarn or string	Hole punch and scissors

Step 1. Bundle the sticks together and tie them with string or yarn so they create a “bouquet” of twigs.

Step 2. Place your “bouquet” into your container and add the rocks or marbles to your container.

Step 3. Cut the construction paper into shapes of leaves or apples or other desired shapes. Write on the cut shapes about things that you are thankful for. For a free printable leaf template you can download and print (for personal use only), go to <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9RkuBEkvfwDMIZuQVV0VTRILV/view>

Step 4. Punch a hole near the top of the cut shapes to insert a piece of pipe cleaner, twist tie, hook, or yarn.

Step 5. Fasten or tie the shapes onto the tree branches.

OPTIONAL

Instead of writing things that you are thankful for, write Thanksgiving “to-dos” on each and make time during the holiday season to do them with family members. Examples include:

- Make an in-kind donation of groceries or volunteer your time to the **Salem/Roanoke County Food Pantry** (915 Union St, Salem, 389-6938).
- Make a donation of coats or other winter items to **Mrs. Dorsey’s Community Clothes Closet** (825 S. Colorado St, Salem; 389-4889; open Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays from 9am to 12noon; closed Nov. 26th & 27th).
- Donate to, volunteer your time at, or create a Food & Fund Drive for **Feeding Southwest Virginia** (go to <https://www.feedingswva.org/ways-to-give/> for more info).
- Contact your church to see if they will be serving food on Thanksgiving or will be conducting a food drive prior to the holiday.



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Coping with Burnout (continued from page 2)

all day. It can be a vicious cycle too, as trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep can also be caused by stress, anxiety, and depression.



4. Significant Weight Change

Suddenly gaining or losing weight can be another warning sign. For some people, stress can result in weight loss when they can't seem to find time to eat adequately or nutritiously. Anxiety often lowers the appetite as well. For others, feeling stressed or guilty leads to weight gain from mindless or emotionally triggered eating, frequent snacking, or quick but unhealthy food choices.

Changes in eating and sleeping habits can also indicate depression. If your weight has changed by more than five or ten pounds since you began caregiving, your body may be sending you a signal that you need help.

5. Physical Ailments

If you find yourself getting headaches more often or feeling like you just catch one cold after another, that could be another warning sign. Or if you're getting chronic back or neck aches or developed high blood pressure. Mental and emotional stress can cause physical disorders. For example, stress can lead to head-

aches that are more frequent, more persistent, or stronger than you're used to. You'll also lack the time or inclination to properly take care of yourself, setting the stage for more stress. Stress lowers immunity, which is part of the reason caregivers have nearly double the risk of chronic illnesses compared to non-caregivers.

6. Social Isolation

If you find yourself going entire days while seeing no one but your care recipient or are dropping out of your usual activities to care for someone, that can lead to burnout as well. Getting out can simply be hard if you're responsible for providing care. You may feel you lack the time for your former pursuits. Your care recipient's changes in behavior may also make you feel embarrassed or make going out in public too onerous to attempt. Whether inten-

tionally or not, you may become withdrawn. Unfortunately, social isolation itself contributes to stress, whereas being with others and taking time for yourself are both replenishing.



7. Complaints from Family

If you're getting complaints from family, or getting in more arguments with them, that could be a sign of burnout. It's a common caregiver temptation—and mistake—to take on the entire burden of care. It's also easy to make ourselves think that we have everything under control or that things aren't so bad. Denial is a powerful emotion. When you're in the thick of things, it can be hard to see other ways of doing it. Listening to an outsider can be healthy, even if you don't agree. What may sound like a criticism or complaint may have a nugget of truth that relates to your emotional well-being.



Coping Strategies for Caregiver Stress

1. **Seek professional guidance and support groups**—Ask at local hospitals, senior centers, places of worship, or the Alzheimer's Association.

2. **Ask family and friends for help**—Not only will it give you some time to relax, but those filling in will better understand both your needs and your care recipient's needs. Make sure to express your gratitude. Ask your loved one who they would most like to pitch in, and when approaching potential helpers, be specific about what's required and get a solid commitment about the days and times they're available.
3. **Bring your employer into the loop**—You may be eligible for caregiving-related programs, including leave time, flex time, free needs-assessments by geriatric care managers, and more. [Not all employers may offer all of these options.]



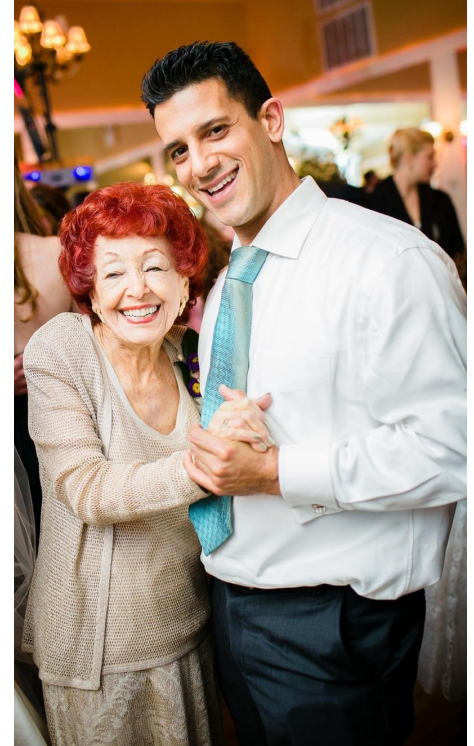
4. **Adopt a problem-solving approach**—Try to break down the tasks of caregiving into specific puzzles to be solved: If bathing is stressful, try to figure out exactly why and what might be done about it. Defining concrete problems and identifying possible solutions puts you closer to getting help with them and helps you avoid feeling overwhelmed by the big picture.

5. **Listen when your body talks**—Chances are that ignoring a new symptom isn't going to help it go away; it will only start shouting at you by getting worse.
6. **Connect with your loved one's doctor**—Research shows that when doctors find ways to address the unique needs of individual caregivers, the stress load is reduced—admittedly a tall order when physicians are short on time and have a primary relationship with the care receiver.
7. **Schedule yourself in**—Caregivers spend an inordinate amount of time with a loved ones' doctors but seldom with their own. Make your own appointments for regular exams, flu shots, dental visits, and the like at the same time you arrange a loved one's. Some practitioners allow simultaneous visits for pairs who share providers.



8. **Find healthy emotional outlets**—Caregivers need at least one safe place to vent. Maybe this is a friend who agrees to listen without judging, or a diary that's scribbled

in and then burned. Peer support from others in similar situations is ideal. Online caregiver forums provide safe places to vent 24/7.



9. **Find ways to exercise**—Although many caregivers are daunted by the idea of finding time or opportunity, and still others loathe the idea of spending precious free time working up a sweat, doctors increasingly agree that if you do just one good thing for your overall health, it's moving your muscles and working your heart a bit every day.

Excerpted from <https://www.caring.com/caregivers/burnout/>



Salem Public Library

28 E Main Street
Salem VA 24153

Phone: 540-375-3089

Fax: 540-389-7054

Email:
library@salemva.gov

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Online Library Catalog
www.rvl.info](#)

[Roanoke Valley Libraries
e-Books & e-Audiobooks
rvl.overdrive.com](#)

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DEPARTMENTS/SALEM
-PUBLIC-LIBRARY](https://www.salemva.gov/departments/salem-public-library)



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to see our calendar
of events

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER: This free, weekly (during the pandemic) newsletter is intended for people over 50 and their caregivers.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: If you would like to subscribe to our newsletter, please let us know by either:

- Calling the library between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. each day OR
- Email us at library@salemva.gov OR
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LIBRARY SERVICES/EVENTS BEING OFFERED AT THIS TIME:

CONTACT FREE PICK-UP is available in our front lobby every day from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for picking up requested items. Please call before heading to the library so that we can check out your items before you get here. *Thank you!*

LEAVE IT TO A LIBRARIAN For Adult Fiction: *The library is closed and you don't want to spend hours browsing the online catalog?* Call us, email us, or click the link on our website home page to give a hint or two (genre, authors you like). Tell us how many books you want. We'll fill a bag and leave it in the front foyer for you.

2020 READING CHALLENGE: Earn prizes for reading! Open to all ages. Call us, email us, or click the link on our website home page for more information.

SOCIALIZE WITH US! ON [FACEBOOK](#), [GOODREADS](#), OR [INSTAGRAM](#)—Click on the icons near the bottom of our [website home page](#).

Click on images or underlined text to be directed to the appropriate website.

Scan the QR code (bottom left on this page) to see our [Calendar of Events](#).

Thankful Tree (continued from page 5)

- Offer to walk dogs or play with cats at the **Salem Animal Shelter** (1301 Indiana St, Salem; 375-3038; open Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 10am-4:30pm, Sat 10am-3:30 pm).
- Create and mail a “thinking of you” card to someone you know who is isolated during the pandemic.
- If you are able, offer to pick up and deliver groceries, rake leaves, mow grass, or other outdoor chore for an elderly neighbor who is unable to do so.
- Write thank you notes to your mail carrier, garbage collector, newspaper carrier, or others who provide services that you may not normally see to say thank you to.